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SOURCE Newspapers as indicated.

REVIEW OF BUDAPEST NEWSPAPERS,
31 OCTOBER - 13 NOVEMBER 1951

The following review is based on the 31 October - 13 November 1951 issues of the Budapest newspapers Szabad Nep, Nepszava, Magyar Nemzet, Vilagossag, and Kis Ujsag.

Recent Trends

The Budapest press has experienced a marked change over the past several months. Until last spring, vicious language and indiscriminate attacks against foreign foes and domestic population groups (former middle classes, kulaks, and right-wing socialists) were the order of the day. The US and Tito were enemies No 1 and 2. Vitriolic outbursts in editorials, special reports, and a stream of letters to the editor were regularly found in Budapest newspapers.

Since last spring these attacks have either stopped completely or have been toned down. At present, the tone of the Budapest press in general is inoffensive. Also, direct pressure on population groups unfriendly to the regime has been relaxed. The current approach to the US and to domestic passive resistance is as follows:

1. In dealing with the US, the Budapest press recently appears to have adopted the technique of indirection. It now quotes from American sources to a greater degree than previously, especially muckraking passages or passages conveying US intentions to subjugate the world. One of the most quoted American publications is the US News and World Report; however, other publications, as well as speeches of senators, congressmen, business leaders, etc., are quoted extensively. Some of the quotations appear bona fide, others appear to be distortions of the real intent of the source. The book review mentioned under "Political" below is an illustration of this technique.

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2. Among the population, as mentioned above, members of the former middle classes, right-wing social democratic workers, and kulaks were previously the main targets of abuse. These three groups were blamed by all the papers for nonfulfillment of plan quotas, inferior quality of products, shortages of foods and textiles, mismanagement of operations, etc., and retaliation was demanded in articles and letters to the editor. The current approach shows a marked change from the former treatment and is summarized in the following:

a. Defects in industry are currently ascribed to the party workers and managements. The party agitators fail to perform adequate educational work among the workers, and the managements are bogged down by lack of know-how and firmness in making decisions and taking necessary action. Demand for single personal responsibility in operations is increasing, in contrast to the existing "triangle" of management-party-trade union responsibility. Groups of workers are no longer singled out for attacks, although propaganda against individuals lax in their work habits (e.g., tardy, early in going home at the end of the work day) persists.

b. In agriculture, demands are made to extend punishment for the non-fulfillment of delivery quotas to the working peasants. This trend is, presumably, a new technique for driving the reluctant peasants into producers' cooperatives.

Economic

1. During the first half of the period 31 October - 13 November 1951, the main propaganda effort of the Budapest press was directed toward increased production and farm deliveries in honor of 7 November, the anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. Propaganda appeared partly in the form of editorials, special articles, and reports, and partly in letters to the editor from workers and producers' cooperatives pledging overfulfillment of production and grain delivery quotas, respectively.

2. A number of articles complained bitterly about lags in quota fulfillment and inferior quality of products (Nepszava, 2 November; Szabad Nep, 31 October and 1, 2, 4, and 10 November). The 31 October issue of Szabad Nep contained a particularly sharp denunciation of work peasants lagging in grain surrender quotas.

3. On 7 November, Dunapentele, where the huge Danubian Ironworks is under construction, was renamed Sztalinvaros (Stalin City). At the same time, the name of the works was changed to Stalin Ironworks. An insignificant small town prior to 1949, Dunapentele now has a population of 14,800, according to the 3 November issue of Szabad Nep.

Political

1. Celebration of 7 November was the dominant theme in the entire daily press during the first week of November. Hundreds of decorations were awarded, and Szabad Nep featured a full-page article by Matyas Rakosi, previously published in the 6 November issue of Pravda. The article was a paean to the USSR and Stalin, whose name was mentioned 14 times. The principal themes of the article were: Hungary's gratitude for Soviet help, the unmasking of Tito by Stalin, the spread of Communism in Asia and in every country of the world, confusion in the capitalistic countries, 800 million people in the peace camp, and the higher cultural level of the Hungarian peasantry.

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2. The 9 November issue of Szabad Nep contained a suggestion of a possible pact with the West on an economic basis, inconspicuously placed in a long tirade against Western warmongers: "Today, as during its entire existence, the USSR continues a policy of peace. The Soviet government is of the opinion that coexistence of the two systems is possible. As pointed out by Comrade Stalin, exports and imports offer the most suitable ground for a pact between the USSR and the capitalistic countries."

3. Articles attacking the US, the UN, the West in general, and Tito were comparatively moderate in tone and few in number. Only six articles which could be considered specific attacks were published in Szabad Nep, Nepszava, and Magyar Nemzet during the period under review. These were as follows:

a. The 3 November issue of Szabad Nep had a two-column article against Tito.

b. The 4 and 9 November (see 2 above) issues of Szabad Nep and the 6 and 7 November issues of Nepszava contained attacks on the UN apropos of the Paris meeting.

c. The 10 November issue of Magyar Nemzet had a long review of Washington Confidential, by Jack Lait and Lee Mortimer. According to the review, the book depicts the moral decadence and general corruption of Washington and the whole United States. The review highlights the passages of the book dealing with: (1) call girls; these are girls employed by the federal government, who make a side income of 5 to 100 dollars a night by putting life into immoral parties; (2) some 6,000 homosexual male government employees, whose favorite rendezvous is Lafayette Park near the White House; because of widespread homosexuality, government employees are not admitted to the swimming pool of the Washington YMCA; and (3) general corruption and bribery.

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